United States Patent [19]

Smith et al.

[11] **4,054,869**

[45] **Oct. 18, 1977**

[54] SIGNAL SWITCHING CIRCUIT FOR MULTIPLE SOUND SIREN SYSTEM

[75] Inventors: **Gerald D. Smith; Sammie S. Witte,** both of Indianapolis, Ind.

[73] Assignee: **Carson Manufacturing Company,** Indianapolis, Ind.

[21] Appl. No.: **629,016**

[22] Filed: **Nov. 5, 1975**

[51] **Int. Cl.**[2] **G08B 3/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **340/384 E;** 340/384 R

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 340/384 R, 384 E; 331/78, 56, 49

[56] **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2,910,688	10/1959	Kelley et al.	331/49
3,810,169	5/1974	Locke	340/384 R
3,868,684	2/1975	Nunn, Jr.	340/384 E

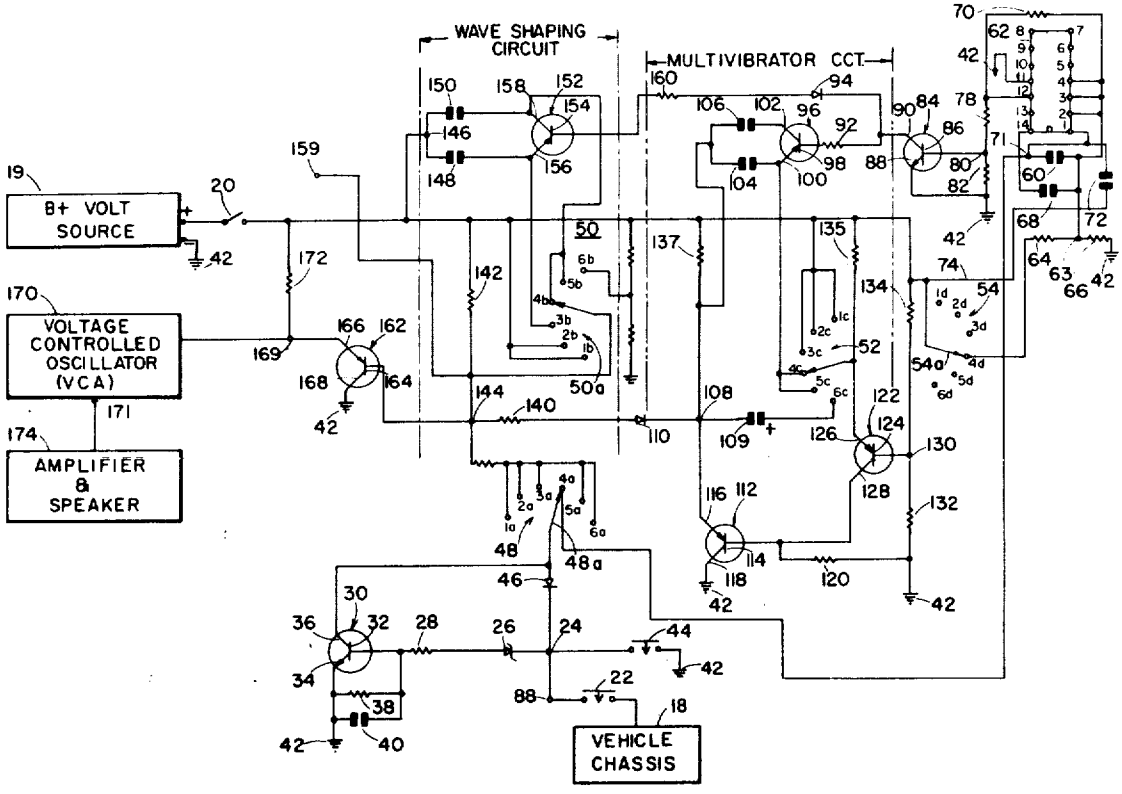
Primary Examiner—Harold I. Pitts

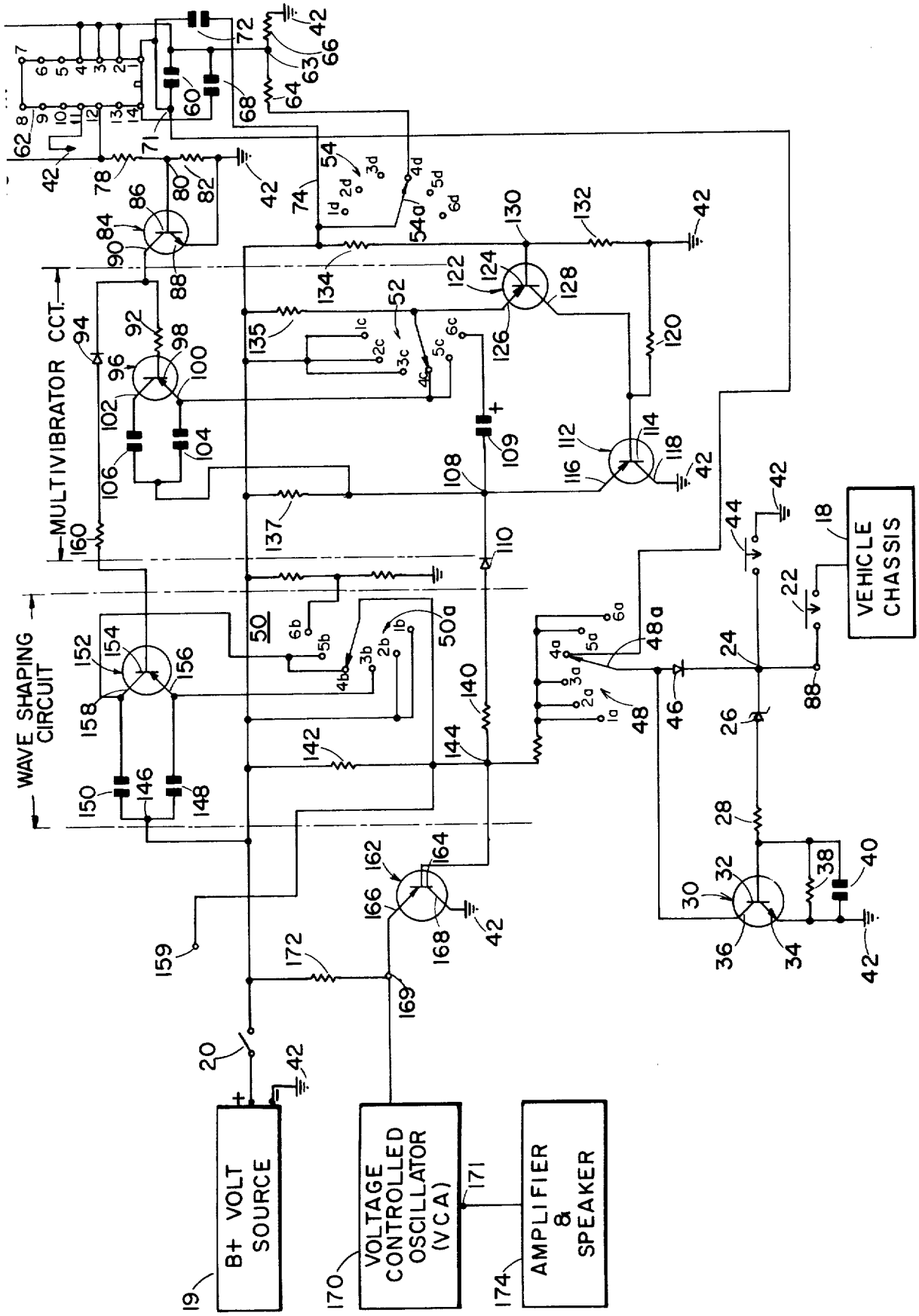
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Gust, Irish, Jeffers & Rickert

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A circuit for switching between two signals of different frequency, such as "wail" and "yelp" of an electronic siren, by switching between different capacitive values in a multivibrator circuit. A monostable switch couples a reference level voltage to an integrated flip-flop circuit. The integrated circuit receives a reference level pulse when the monostable switch is closed and supplies a switching voltage to a transistor circuit. The transistor circuit places capacitances in parallel to change the time constant of the multivibrator circuit and also to change the characteristics of wave-shaping circuitry coupled to the multivibrator circuit. A reference level circuit accepts either of two voltage levels and provides a reference level voltage.

15 Claims, 1 Drawing Figure




MULTIVIBRATOR CCT.
WAVE SHAPING CIRCUIT
B+ VOLT SOURCE
VOLTAGE CONTROLLED OSCILLATOR (VCA)
AMPLIFIER & SPEAKER
VEHICLE CHASSIS

SIGNAL SWITCHING CIRCUIT FOR MULTIPLE SOUND SIREN SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention is in the field of switching circuits and in particular the use of such circuits to change siren modes in emergency vehicle siren systems.

2. Brief Description of the Prior Art

Multivibrator circuits have been used for providing a variable voltage to a voltage controlled oscillator (VCO) in emergency vehicle siren circuits for many years. U.S. Pat. No. 3,747,092 entitled "ELECTRONIC SIREN CIRCUIT" inventor Gerald D. Smith, illustrates such a circuit. The VCO output frequency is amplified to provide a siren signal. In such a circuit, it is desirable to switch from one siren sound or mode to a distinctly different siren sound or mode for brief periods of time to provide an additional and more intensive warning sound during emergency situations. In previous circuits this was accomplished by manually holding a switch closed for the desired period of time; incorporating a predetermined time delay into a manual switch so that the second siren sound would be activated for the predetermined time upon the closing of a switch; or by manipulating a switch to activate the second siren sound and then manipulating a different switch to restore the first siren sound. The above approaches all have the disadvantages of inflexibility and the requirement of attention diverting manual operations during emergency vehicle operation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention provides a circuit for an emergency vehicle siren which can switch from one vehicle siren sound, such as a "wail" sound, to a second more intensive siren sound, such as a "yelp" sound. The switching is accomplished by a momentary closing of a monostable switch which may conveniently be actuated by the vehicle horn ring or a foot switch. The "wail" siren sound may be restored by a momentary closing of the same monostable switch thus providing flexibility of siren operation and minimum operator manipulation during emergency periods. Further, the above circuit is equally adaptable to vehicle electrical systems where the vehicle chassis voltage level is positive or negative. The circuit is noise immune and stable. This invention provides a monostable switch between a reference level voltage and an integrated circuit which receives a voltage pulse and establishes an output bias voltage until a second reference voltage pulse is received. The reference voltage pulses are supplied by closing of the monostable switch. The bias voltage switches a control transistor "on" which in turn switches two circuit transistors "on" to place additional capacitance in multivibrator and wave-shaping circuits. One circuit transistor switches in capacitance to control the frequency of the multivibrator circuit and the second circuit transistor switches in capacitance to control the shaping of the multivibrator output waveform. The output signal of the multivibrator wave-shaping circuit is coupled to a VCO to produce the "wail" and "yelp" frequencies and these in turn are amplified to produce corresponding siren sounds.

Circuitry is also provided which will accept positive or negative vehicle chassis voltage levels and automatically convert these levels to a reference voltage level so that the circuit is adaptable automatically to vehicles which operate at different chassis voltage levels.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a circuit which will switch between either of two output frequencies to the other of the two output frequencies upon closing a switch.

It is an object to provide in a circuit of the foregoing object a switch coupling between a reference voltage and a flip-flop circuit, and circuit means to convert a plurality of voltage levels to the reference voltage.

It is an object to provide in the circuits of the foregoing objects means for coupling predetermined wave-shaping components operably into the circuit upon said switch closing.

The above-mentioned and other features and objects of this invention and the manner of attaining them will become more apparent and the invention itself will be best understood by reference to the following description of an embodiment of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The drawing is a partial block diagram and schematic drawing of a preferred embodiment of this invention.

DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the drawing, a schematic is shown which has certain components common to those shown in the aforementioned Smith U.S. Pat. No. 3,747,092 with the common circuit components operating in similar manners.

The embodiment shown in the drawing is mounted in a vehicle having a chassis **18.** Depending on the make of the vehicle, the chassis will be at either negative or positive battery potential, usually 12 volts. The manually operable circuit of this invention has a single conductor that may be connected to either vehicle chassis potential which will automatically provide a reference voltage for siren operation as will become apparent.

The vehicle has a B+ supply **19** such as a 12 volt vehicle battery and a power "on-off" switch **20** which may be mounted in fixed relation to the vehicle control or dash panel, as shown, supply **19** having its negative terminal connected to the siren circuit ground **42,** and either its positive or negative terminal connected to vehicle chassis **18.** In this description, the term ground potential refers to that potential at the negative post of supply **19.** A monostable switch **22,** spring urged to an open position as shown, is connected between chassis **18** and junction **24.** Switch **22** is mounted in the vehicle within reach of the operator and may be associated with the vehicle horn ring so as to close when the ring is depressed. It may also be conveniently mounted for operation as a foot switch.

A zener diode **26,** which has a breakdown voltage of $+7\frac{1}{2}$ V. is cathode connected to junction **24** and anode connected through current limiting resistor **28** to base **32** of NPN transistor **30.** Emitter **34** of transistor **30** is connected by resistor **38** to base **32** to bias transistor **30** "off" in the absence of conduction by diode **26.** Filter capacitor **40** is connected between ground **42** and base **32** and prevents stray radio frequency signals from triggering transistor **30.** Switch **44** is a manual monostable switch connected between junction **24** and ground **42** and provides an additional circuit actuating switch.

Diode **46** is cathode connected to junction **24** and anode connected to rotor switch arm **48***a* of rotary

switch **48**. Switch **48** has stationary contacts **1***a* to **6***a* and is ganged with switches **50, 52** and **54** with their respective rotor arms **50***a*, **52***a* and **54***a* movable with rotor arm **48***a*. All switches have six fixed contacts but for the purpose of this description, arms **48***a*–**54***a* will be considered in stationary contact with contacts **4***a*–**4***d*, respectively, as shown.

Contact **4***a* of switch **48** is connected to capacitor **60** and to pin **1** of integrated circuit flip-flop circuit **62** which in this embodiment is a Fairchild High Speed TTL/SS1.9H73/54 73, 74H73. The specifications and operation of this circuit are available on pages 5–106 and 5–107 of Fairchild Semiconductor TTL Data Book dated June, 1972.

When potential is applied to pins **2, 3** and **4**, capacitor **68** will charge applying a momentary positive pulse to pin **4** of circuit **62**. This will allow pin **12** to rise in voltage to a level of +5.0 V. Pin **11** of circuit **62** is grounded.

Capacitor **60** is also connected to pin **1** of circuit **62** and to junction **63** between voltage divider resistors **64** and **66**. Resistor **66** is connected to ground **42** and resistor **64** is connected to contact **4***d* of switch **54**.

Capacitor **68** is connected between pin **14** of circuit **62** and junction **63** and receives a positive pulse from pin **14** on every input pulse to pin **1**. Pins **2–4** are connected through resistor **70** to pin **12** for reasons later explained. Capacitor **72** is connected between circuit **62** pin **1** and B+ line **74** filtering noise on line **74** preventing any "bounce" or "chatter" due to noise that might result in a false triggering pulse.

After ground potential has been removed from the anode side of diode **46**, as would occur upon opening of switch **22**, the potential at pin **1** of circuit **62** is raised to the potential of juncture **71** between capacitors **60** and **72** which is intermediate the voltage level of junction **63** and line **74**.

A voltage divider consisting of resistors **78** and **82**, connected at junction **80**, is connected between resistor **70** and ground **42**. Base **86** of NPN transistor **84**, having emitter **88** and collector **90**, is connected to junction **80** and emitter **88** is connected to ground **42**. Collector **90** is connected to resistor **92** and the cathode of diode **94**. Base **98** of transistor **96**, having emitter **100** and collector **102**, is connected to resistor **92**, emitter **100** is connected to contact **4***c* of switch **52** and to capacitor **104**. Collector **102** is connected to capacitor **106**, with capacitors **104** and **106** being connected together and to a juncture **108** which is between the cathode of diode **110** and the emitter **116** of PNP transistor **112** having base **114** and collector **118**. Capacitor **109** connects junction **108** and terminal **6***c* of switch **52**. The collector **118** is connected to ground **42** and base **114** is connected to resistor **120** and collector **128** of transistor **122** having base **124** and emitter **126**. Base **124** is connected to the junction **130** between voltage divider resistors **132** and **134** which provide base bias therefor. Resistor **134** is connected to B+ line **74** and arm **54***a* of switch **54**. Resistor **135** is connected between collector **126** and B+ line **74** and resistor **137** is connected between junction **108** and line **74**.

As will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, transistors **112** and **122** are thus coupled in multivibrator relation and upon a B+ signal being applied to line **74**, a multivibrator output signal will appear at the cathode of diode **110**. When transistor **96** is conductive, both capacitances **104** and **106** will be in the circuit and the multivibrator will oscillate at a relatively slow rate and will produce a "wail" sound, and when transistor **96** is non-conductive, only capacitance **104** will be in the circuit producing a relatively high frequency or "yelp" siren sound.

A multivibrator wave-shaping circuit is provided and comprises voltage divider resistors **140** and **142** connected at junction **144** and capacitors **148** and **150**. Resistor **142** is connected to B+ line **74**, as is junction **146** between capacitors **148** and **150** which are connected respectively to emitter **156** and collector **158** of PNP transistor **152** having base **154**. Base **154** is connected to resistor **160** which is connected to the anode of diode **94**. Collector **158** is connected to contact **4***b* of switch **50** and switch arm **50***a* is connected to microphone terminal **159** for reasons defined in the above-mentioned Smith patent, and to base **164** of transistor **162** having emitter **166** and collector **168**. Collector **168** is connected to ground **42** and emitter **166** is coupled to VCO **170**, and to B+ line **74** through resistor **172**.

VCO **170** is a variable frequency, astable multivibrator circuit. The operation of this type of circuit is well known to those skilled in the art and it is sufficient to state that it will generate a square wave signal having a frequency which is directly proportional to the voltage applied to its input terminal **169**.

It will be understood by those skilled in the art that when transistor **152** is conductive, both capacitances **148** and **150** will be in the wave-shaping circuit and provide a "coast" or sloped wave shape to the multivibrator output signal in the "wail" mode appearing at junction **108**, and when transistor **152** is non-conductive, only capacitance **150** will be in the wave-shaping circuit to add a steeper "coast" or slope to the wave shape at junction **108** for the multivibrator output signal in the "yelp" mode.

The multivibrator output signal at junction **108** from emitter **116** of transistor **112** is coupled to the base **164** of isolating transistor **162** and provides the voltage input control signal to VCO **170**. The essentially square wave output from emitter **116** is shaped by the resistance-capacitance circuitry of resistor **142** and capacitance **150** for the "yelp" mode or capacitances **148** and **150** for the "wail" mode, depending on the conductive state of transistor **152**. These waveforms may be similar to those shown in FIG. **3** of the aforementioned Smith patent and include waveforms A-**1**; A-**2**; B-**1**; B-**2**; C-1 and C-2 thereof. Voltage waveforms A-**1**, A-2 thereof would typically appear at the junction **108** for "wail" and "yelp" respectively. Voltage waveforms B-**1**, B-2 would typically appear at wave-forming output junction **144** for "wail" and "yelp" modes respectively and frequency waveforms C-**1** and C-2 would appear at output **171** of VCO **170** for "wail" and "yelp", respectively. VCO **170** is coupled to amplifier speaker circuit **174** which will audibly produce the siren sounds.

OPERATION

In operation, switch **20** is closed, applying B+ voltage to line **74**. With switch arms **48***a*–**54***a* positioned on contacts **4***a*–**4***d*, respectively, multivibrator circuitry will be in either the "wail" or "yelp" mode, depending on whether transistors **96** and **152** are conductive or non-conductive, respectively. Assuming transistors **96** and **152** are non-conductive, the circuit is in the "yelp" mode, and by simply closing switch **22**, the circuit will be changed to the "wail" mode.

When switch **22** is closed, ground potential will be applied to the cathode of diode **46**, whether vehicle

chassis **18** is at a plus potential or negative potential. If chassis **18** is negative then, of course, ground potential is applied directly to the cathode of diode **46** upon closing of switch **22.**

However, if vehicle chassis **18** is at a positive battery potential, closing of switch **22** will cause zener diode **26** to break down, applying a positive potential to base **32** causing transistor **30** to conduct. This effectively connects the anode of diode **46** to ground **42** thereby achieving the same result as when chassis **18** is at negative potential.

Ground potential at the anode of diode **46** is applied through switch **48** to pin **1** of circuit **62** causing a negative pulse at pin **3** and pin **12** to "flip" to a positive voltage (of about 12 volts), resulting in a positive voltage at junction **80** between resistors **78** and **82.** Since pin **3** is pulsed negatively, current will flow from pin **12** through resistor **70,** thereby momentarily raising or "pulling up" the potential at pin **12** and junction **80** to positively turn "on" transistor **84.** Once transistor **84** is "on", the potential at junction **80** will fall slightly after the pulse at pin **3** but will be sufficient to maintain transistor **84** in the "on" condition.

Once transistor **84** is conductive, both base **98** of transistor **96** and base **154** of transistor **152** will be lowered to ground potential, turning these transistors "on", and placing capacitors **106** and **148,** in parallel with capacitors **104** and **150,** respectively.

When capacitor **106** is so placed in parallel with capacitor **104,** the capacitance in the multivibrator circuit is substantially increased and the pulse frequency and pulse amplitude are correspondingly decreased, as is desired in the "wail" mode of the siren as understood by those skilled in the art. Also, when capacitor **148** is placed in parallel with capacitor **150,** the capacitance in wave-shaping circuit is substantially increased, decreasing the slope of each pulse edge which also is desired in the "wail" mode of the siren.

The voltage waveform present at junction **144** is now that corresponding to the "wail" mode and this is applied to base **164** of transistor **162,** causing corresponding conduction of transistor **162** and a corresponding voltage to VCO **170** which converts the voltage waveform to a corresponding variation in frequency. The output signal of VCO **170** is amplified and converted to an audible signal by amplifier and speaker circuit **174.**

When it is desired to switch from the "wail" siren mode to the "yelp" siren mode, switch **22** is again closed applying ground potential to pin **1** of circuit **62** which causes the potential at pin **12** to "flop" or fall to ground, lowering the potential at junction **80,** turning transistor **84** "off". This opens the circuits of bases **98** and **154,** turning "off" transistors **96** and **152,** respectively, removing capacitances **106, 148** from their respective parallel connections with capacitances **104, 150,** raising the frequency and amplitude of the pulses from that multivibrator circuit and increasing the slope angle of the multivibrator pulse edges, placing the circuit in the "yelp" mode.

In switching from "wail" to "yelp" mode, the negative charge from capacitor **150** tends to bleed off from collector **158** to base **154** of transistor **152.** This would cause a temporary negative voltage at base **98** of transistor **96** through resistors **160** and **92,** causing transistor **96** to remain "on" for a short period after transistor **84** was turned "off". However, diode **94** blocks this negative discharge, insuring that transistor **96** is turned "off" simultaneously with transistor **84.**

Following is listed values of the various components of a working embodiment of this invention, these values being given as exemplary only and not to be considered as limitative of the invention.

RESISTORS	
All resistors ±5%	
Reference numeral	Component
28	2.2K
38	1.5K
64	220
66	10K
70	2.2K
78	2.2K
82	47K
92	120K
120	22K
132	22K
134	8.2K
135	7.5K
137	3.3K
140	3.3K
142	18K
160	18K
172	4.7K

TRANSISTORS	
Reference numeral	component
30	SKA 6183
84	SKA 6183
96	SKA 6182
112	SKA 6182
122	SKA 6182
152	SKA 6182
162	SKA 6182

CAPACITORS	
All capcitors V. unless otherwise indicated	
Reference numeral	Component
40	.1 MFD
60	100 PFD
68	4.7 MFD
72	4.7 MFD
104	15 MFD 10V.
106	200 MFD 12V.
109	47 MFD 10V.
148	200 MFD 12V.
150	15 MFD 10V.

DIODES	
26	IN755
46	IN4001
84	IN457
110	IN457

INTEGRATED CIRCUIT	
62	1C 1 SN 7473

What is claimed is:

1. Apparatus comprising:

variable frequency means for providing a first signal having a first frequency and a second signal having a second frequency; and

control means selectively operable to produce first and second control signals for changing said variable frequency means from said first signal to said second signal, said control means being coupled to a single manually manipulable switch member operable between first and second positions for selecting respective ones of said first and second control signals, said control means changing said variable frequency means to said first signal upon operation of said switch member from said first to said second position and changing said variable frequency means to said second signal upon the next operation of said switch member from said first to said second position.

2. Apparatus according to claim **1** including:

voltage reference means having input and output circuits for receiving a plurality of different voltages at said input circuit and for providing a common reference voltage at its output circuit in response to any one of said plurality of different voltages; and

said output circuit of said voltage reference means being coupled to said control means for changing between said first and second control signals when said switch member is operated between said first and second positions.

3. Apparatus according to claim **1** wherein

said control means produces at least two voltage levels sequentially in response to successive movements of said switch member between said first and second positions; and

said variable frequency means including a multivibrator coupled to said control means to receive said control signals, said multivibrator having a variable capacitance circuit responsive to said control signals, said variable capacitance circuit varying in capacitance in response to said two voltage levels; said multivibrator generating a frequency responsive to the change in capacitance of said variable capacitance circuit.

4. Apparatus according to claim **3** including:

a voltage controlled oscillator having input and output circuits, said input circuit being coupled to said multivibrator to receive said multivibrator frequency, said voltage controlled oscillator generating a signal in said output circuit which varies in frequency in response to a varying voltage signal coupled to the input circuit thereof; and

amplifier and sound reproducing means being coupled to said voltage controlled oscillator output circuit for amplifying and producing audible signals corresponding to the frequency of the output signal of said voltage controlled oscillator.

5. Apparatus according to claim **3** including:

first and second voltage circuits;

said control means having an input and an output terminal;

a capacitance circuit having a first and a second capacitor connected at a juncture and in series between said first and second voltage circuits;

said switch member comprising a monostable switch operable between first and second positions and coupling said control means to a reference voltage; and

said juncture being connected to said control means input terminal and said monostable switch, whereby when said monostable switch is moved from said first to said second position said reference voltage will be coupled to said control means input terminal and when said switch moves from said second position to said first position said input terminal will be at the voltage of said capacitance juncture intermediate the value of said first and second voltage points.

6. Apparatus according to claim **5** including: means for raising the voltage at said output terminal for a predetermined time after an input signal is applied to said input terminal.

7. Apparatus according to claim **5** wherein said control means has a second output terminal coupled through a resistor to said output terminal, said second output terminal being operative to supply a signal for a predetermined time after an input signal is applied to said input terminal whereby when signal is applied to said input terminal, the current flow between said output terminal and said second output terminal raising the voltage level at said output terminal for said predetermined period of time that said second output terminal is operative.

8. Apparatus according to claim **3** including:

a first transistor coupled between said control means and said multivibrator;

said variable capacitance circuit comprising a second transistor coupled to said first transistor and switchable between first and second states by said first transistor; and

said variable capacitance circuit comprising a first capacitor and a second capacitor coupled to said first capacitor by said second transistor whereby when said second transistor is switched by said first transistor to a first state, said first and second capacitors are electrically coupled and when said second transistor is switched by said first transistor to a second state, said first and second capacitors are electrically decoupled.

9. Apparatus according to claim **8** including:

wave-shaping means coupled to said multivibrator for shaping the waves from said multivibrator, said wave-shaping means having a second variable capacitance circuit;

a third transistor coupled to said first transistor and switchable between first and second states by said first transistor; and

said second variable capacitance circuit having a third capacitor coupled to a fourth capacitor coupled by said third transistor whereby when said third transistor is switched by said first transistor to a first state said third and fourth capacitors are electrically coupled, and when said third transistor is switched by said first transistor to a second state said third and fourth capacitors are electrically decoupled.

10. Apparatus according to claim **9** including diode means for coupling said second and third transistors for unidirectionally isolating said second and third transistors whereby the charge on said third transistor will be isolated from said second transistor thereby preventing false operation of said second transistor.

11. Apparatus according to claim **2** wherein said voltage reference means comprises:

a transistor having a base, an emitter, and a collector, said emitter being connected to said common reference voltage and said collector being coupled to said control means;

a diode being coupled between said control means and said switch member; and

a zener diode being coupled between said switch member and the base of said transistor, whereby breakdown conduction of said zener diode biases said transistor to conduction to couple said common reference voltage to said control means.

12. Apparatus according to claim **11** including a biasing resistor coupling said transistor to said common reference voltage to bias said transistor to a non-conductive state when said switch member is in said first position, a capacitor being connected in parallel to said biasing resistor to suppress noise signals.

13. Apparatus comprising:

variable frequency means for providing a first signal having a first frequency and a second signal having a second frequency;

control means selectively operable to produce first and second control signals for changing said variable frequency means from said first signal to said second signal, said control means coupled to a switch member operable between first and second positions for selecting respective ones of said first and second control signals, said control means changing said variable frequency means to said first signal upon operation of said switch member from said first to said second position and changing said variable frequency means to said second signal upon the next operation of said switch member from said first to said second position;

voltage reference means having input and output circuits for receiving a plurality of different voltages at said input circuit and for providing a com-

mon reference voltage at its output circuit in response to any one of said plurality of different voltages;

said output circuit of said voltage reference means being coupled to said control means for changing between said first and second control signals when said switch member is operated between said first and second positions;

said control mean produces at least two voltage levels sequentially in response to successive movements of said switch member between said first and second positions;

said variable frequency means including a multivibrator coupled to said control signals, said multivibrator having a variable capacitance circuit coupled to said control signals, said variable capacitance circuit varying in capacitance in response to said at least two voltage levels; said multivibrator generating a frequency responsive to the change in capacitance of said variable capacitance circuit;

a voltage controlled oscillator having input and output circuits, said input circuit being coupled to said multivibrator to receive said multivibrator frequency, said voltage controlled oscillator generating a signal in said output circuit which varies in frequency in response to a varying voltage signal coupled to the input circuit thereof;

amplifier and sound reproducing means being coupled to said voltage controlled oscillator output circuit for amplifying and producing audible signals corresponding to the frequency of the output signal of said voltage controlled oscillator;

first and second voltage points;

said control means having an input and an output terminal;

a capacitance circuit having a first and a second capacitor connected at a juncture and in series between said first and second voltage points;

said switch member comprising a monostable switch having a first and second position coupling said control means and said common reference voltage;

said juncture being connected to said control means input terminal and said monostable switch, whereby when said monostable switch is moved from said first to said second position said common reference voltage will be coupled to said control means input terminal and when said switch moves from said second position to said first position said input terminal will be at the voltage of said capacitance juncture intermediate the value of said first and second voltage points; and

means for raising the voltage at said output terminal for a predetermined time after an input signal is applied to said input terminal.

14. Apparatus according to claim **13** including:

said voltage reference means comprises a transistor having a base, an emitter, and a collector, said emitter being connected to said common reference voltage and said collector being coupled to said control means;

a diode being coupled between said control means and said switch member;

a zener diode being coupled between said switch member and the base of said transistor, whereby breakdown conduction of said zener diode biases said transistor to conduction to couple said common reference voltage to said control means; and

a biasing resistor coupling said transistor to said common reference voltage to bias said transistor to a non-conductive state when said switch member is in said first position, a capacitor being connected in parallel to said biasing resistor to suppress noise signals.

15. Apparatus comprising:

variable frequency means for providing a first signal having a first frequency and a second signal having a second frequency;

control means selectively operable to produce first and second control signals for changing said variable frequency means from said first signal to said second signal, said control means coupled to a switch member operable between first and second positions for selecting respective ones of said first and second control signals, said control means changing said variable frequency means to said first signal upon operation of said switch member from said first to said second position and changing said variable frequency means to said second signal upon the next operation of said switch member from said first to said second position;

voltage reference means having input and output circuits for receiving a plurality of different voltages at said input circuit and for providing a common reference voltage at its output circuit in response to any one of said plurality of different voltages;

said output circuit of said voltage reference means being coupled to said control means for changing between said first and second control signals when said switch member is operated between said first and second positions;

said control means produces at least two voltage levels sequentially in response to successive movements of said switch member between said first and second positions;

said variable frequency means including a multivibrator coupled to said control signals, said multivibrator having a variable capacitance circuit coupled to said control signals, said variable capacitance circuit varying in capacitance in response to said at least two voltage levels; said multivibrator generating a frequency responsive to the change in capacitance of said variable capacitance circuit;

a voltage controlled oscillator having input and output circuits, said input circuit being coupled to said multivibrator to receive said multivibrator frequency, said voltage controlled oscillator generating a signal in said output circuit which varies in frequency in response to a varying voltage signal coupled to the input circuit thereof;

amplifier and sound reproducing means being coupled to said voltage controlled oscillator output circuit for amplifying and producing audible signals corresponding to the frequency of the output signal of said voltage controlled oscillator;

first and second voltage points;

said control means having an input and an output terminal;

a capacitance circuit having a first and a second capacitor connected at a juncture and in series between said first and second voltage points;

said switch member comprising a monostable switch having a first and second position coupling said control means and said common reference voltage;

said juncture being connected to said control means input terminal and said monostable switch, whereby when said monostable switch is moved from said first to said second position said common reference voltage will be coupled to said control means input terminal and when said switch moves from said second position to said first position said input terminal will be at the voltage of said capacitance juncture intermediate the value of said first and second voltage points;

said control means has a second output terminal coupled through a resistor to said output terminal, said second output terminal being operative to supply a signal for a predetermined time after an input signal is applied to said input terminal whereby when signal is applied to said input terminal, the current flow between said output terminal and said second output terminal raising the voltage level at said output terminal for said predetermined period of time that said second output terminal is operative;

a first transistor;

said variable capacitance coupled between said control means and said multivibrator, circuit comprising a second transistor coupled to said first transistor and switchable between first and second states by said first transistor;

said variable capacitance circuit comprising a first capacitor and a second capacitor coupled to said first capacitor by said second transistor whereby when said second transistor is switched by said first transistor to a first state, said first and second capacitors are electrically coupled and when said second transistor is switched by said first transistor to a second state, said first and second capacitors are electrically decoupled;

wave-shaping means coupled to said multivibrator for shaping the waves from said multivibrator, said wave-shaping means having a second variable capacitance circuit;

a third transistor coupled to said first transistor and switchable between first and second states by said first transistor;

said second variable capacitance circuit having a third capacitor coupled to a fourth capacitor coupled by said third transistor whereby when said third transistor is switched by said first transistor to a first state said third and fourth capacitors are electrically coupled, and when said third transistor is switched by said first transistor to a second state said third and fourth capacitors are electrically decoupled; and

diode means for coupling said second and third transistors for unidirectionally isolating said second and third transistors whereby the charge on said third transistor will be isolated from said second transistor thereby preventing false operation of said second transistor.

* * * * *